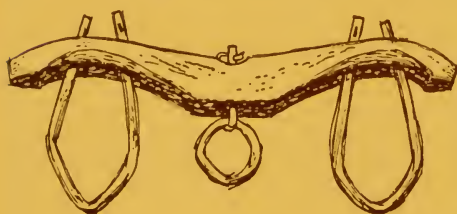


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Law, Frederick Houk  
A guide to the school editions  
of the David Wark Griffith  
Production "Abraham Lincoln"

LINCOLN ROOM

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# PHOTOPLAY STUDIES

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NUMBER 10



A GUIDE TO THE DISCUSSION OF THE D. W. GRIFFITH PRODUCTION,  
"ABRAHAM LINCOLN," STARRING WALTER HUSTON

**RECOMMENDED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF SECONDARY  
TEACHERS OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION**



## BEHIND THE PRODUCTION

### OF

## "ABRAHAM LINCOLN"

Director, David Wark Griffith.

Story and production advisor, John W. Considine, Jr.

Continuity and dialogue by Stephen Vincent Benet and Gerrit Lloyd.

Photographed by Karl Struss.

Settings by William Cameron Menzies.

Sets executed by Park French.

Musical arrangements by Hugo Reisenfeld.

Film edited by James Smith and Hal C. Kern.

Associate dialogue director, Harry Stubs.

Sound recorded by Harold Witt.

Costumes executed by Walter Israel.

## THE CAST

Tom Lincoln.....	W. L. Thorne
Nancy Hanks Lincoln.....	Helen Freeman
Offut.....	Otto Hoffman
Abraham Lincoln.....	Walter Huston
Armstrong .....	Edgar Deering
Ann Rutledge.....	Una Merkel
Lincoln's Employer.....	Russell Simpson
Sheriff .....	Charles Crockett
Mary Todd Lincoln.....	Kay Hammond
Mrs. Edwards.....	Helen Ware
Stephen A. Douglas.....	E. Alyn Warren
Herndon .....	Jason Robards
Tad Lincoln.....	Gordon Thorpe
John Wilkes Booth.....	Ian Keith
John Hay.....	Cameron Prudhomme
General Scott.....	James Brabbury, Sr.
Young Soldier.....	Jimmie Eagle
General Grant.....	Fred Warren
Secretary of War Stanton.....	Oscar Apfel
General Sheridan.....	Frank Campeau
General Lee.....	Hobart Bosworth
Colonel Marshall.....	Henry B. Walthall

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Lincoln  
Room

A GUIDE TO THE SCHOOL EDITIONS OF  
THE DAVID WARK GRIFFITH PRODUCTION

# ABRAHAM LINCOLN

PREPARED BY FREDERICK HOUK LAW, PH.D.

Chairman, Department of English, Stuyvesant High School, New York City

## THE STORY OF THE PHOTOPLAY

D. W. GRIFFITH'S ABRAHAM LINCOLN, starring Walter Huston, has been edited for school use in four editions of varying length to meet the needs of all grade-levels. Each edition is a unified 16 mm. talking picture in itself. In its complete form, ten reels, called *The Entire Life and Career of Abraham Lincoln*, the film presents the story of the most loved of American Presidents, beginning with the wind-swept forest frontier, proceeding through all the details of Lincoln's early life and experiences, and ending with his death.

The five-reel edition, *The Private and Public Life of Abraham Lincoln*, begins with his appearance as a leading political figure, shows the influence of his family and familiar associates, his development toward power, some of the most stirring events of the Civil War, and the principal events in Lincoln's career as President.

The three-reel edition, *The Public Life of Abraham Lincoln*, is especially adapted for presentation within the limits of a single classroom period. It includes just those events in the life of Lincoln that are most studied in school—the Lincoln-Douglas debates, Lincoln

and his Cabinet, the conduct of the Civil War, the making of the Emancipation Proclamation, the carrying out of Lincoln's great ideals, and his tragic death.

The one-reel edition, *Highlights of Lincoln's Career*, includes scenes of the Lincoln-Douglas debates, the conduct of the Civil War, and Lincoln's assassination. The running-time of the reel is held to eleven minutes, in order to allow time for group discussion immediately after the screening.

In any one of these four editions ABRAHAM LINCOLN has for its general theme all that we understand when we speak of "Americanism." In detail, the great themes of the photoplay are love of country, devotion to duty, reverence, respect, mercy, sympathy, and understanding.

The film is, moreover, emphatically non-sectional. Nowhere has there been a nobler, more appreciative presentation of the soldiers both of the North and of the South, and especially of the inspiring figures of Lincoln and Lee. In showing those great persons the film is deeply moving.

The teacher should lead pupils to draw from the quick series of dramatic incidents not alone the interest of action, but also the higher values that are everywhere present.



*How did Lincoln gain his education?*



*Describe the costume and the setting.*

## REAL PERSONS IN THE PLAY

### 1. THOMAS LINCOLN (TEN-REEL EDITION):

What does the play show about the kind of life that Lincoln's father led? About his work? His home? His neighbors? (*Lincoln's first American ancestors were Puritans who settled in New England. Their descendants wandered away into Virginia and Kentucky, and in the latter place Lincoln's grandfather was killed by an Indian. Lincoln's father, always a poor man, moved from farm to farm and State to State, living in Kentucky, Illinois, and Indiana.*)

### 2. NANCY HANKS (TEN-REEL EDITION):

How does Lincoln's mother impress you? (*Nancy Hanks was a descendant of a Virginia family that had moved into the mountains and the forest to lead a pioneer life. She was emotional, religious,*

*and devoted to her husband and her son. The hardships she had to endure brought about her death at an all too early age.*)

### 3. ANN RUTLEDGE (TEN-REEL EDITION):

For what reasons do you like Ann Rutledge? What did she do for Lincoln? How did her death affect him? (*At the time of her death in 1835, Ann Rutledge was only 19 and Lincoln 26. Ann's father kept a tavern, in which Lincoln had a room. She appears to have been a most attractive and inspiring young woman. Her death was caused by malaria, a mosquito-borne disease especially prevalent in pioneer times. Read to the class Edgar Lee Masters' beautiful poem, "Ann Rutledge," in his "Spoon River Anthology." Explain the poem to the class, emphasizing the lines, "Out of me the for-*

*givenness of millions towards millions and the beneficent face of a nation.”)*

4. MARY TODD (TEN-REEL AND FIVE-REEL EDITIONS):

Tell the story of Lincoln and Mary Todd. In what ways had their lives been unlike? For what reasons was each drawn to the other? Why did Lincoln amuse Mary Todd? Why did he arouse her admiration? Why did Lincoln fail to appear on the first date set for the wedding? How did Mrs. Lincoln help her husband? What were some of her peculiarities? Some of her good traits? (*Mary Todd was a member of an aristocratic family that had produced two Governors and several other distinguished leaders. She had gained an excellent education in a fashionable private school. Her ability and practical nature served as steadying influences, and led Lincoln toward high success.*)

5. STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS (ALL EDITIONS):

How did he differ from Lincoln? What did he think of Lincoln, as seen in the early part of the picture? How did he rival Lincoln in more ways than one? How did his policies differ from Lincoln's? What were the Lincoln-Douglas debates? To what did they lead? (*Stephen A. Douglas, four years younger than Lincoln, was Lincoln's rival in love, in*

*local and in State politics, in debate concerning National issues, and in the contest for the Presidency. When Lincoln began law-practice in Springfield, Illinois, Douglas lived there as prosecuting attorney; when Lincoln became Congressman in 1847 Douglas became United States Senator; in 1860, in the contest for the Presidency, Douglas gained 1,375,157 votes; Lincoln 1,866,352. Douglas proposed to let the people of a territory decide whether the territory should be free or slave. Lincoln said: "A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this Government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free."*)

6. WILLIAM H. HERNDON (TEN-REEL EDITION):

What does Lincoln's law partner do in the picture? What kind of man does he show himself to be? How does he affect Lincoln's actions and life? (*William H. Herndon was 26 when he became the law partner of Lincoln, who was then 35. The partnership continued until Lincoln's death. Out of his intimate knowledge Herndon wrote "Lincoln: The True Story of a Great Life."*)

7. TAD LINCOLN (TEN-REEL, FIVE-REEL, AND THREE-REEL EDITIONS):

How do the child's actions illuminate Lincoln's char-



*How does tragedy affect interest in the photoplay?*

acter? Why is the motion picture strengthened by inclusion of Tad? (*Lincoln, always fond of children, gave deep affection to his three sons, Robert, who at 22 became a Captain in Grant's army, and Tad and Willie, both of whom died during the darkest days of the Civil War, bringing untold grief to their father. Both children had played about the White House, and had been present at even the most serious conferences.*)

8. JOHN HAY (ALL EDITIONS):

How does Lincoln's Private Secretary impress you? (*John Hay, a young lawyer, became one of Lincoln's secretaries in 1861 when he was only 23. Later in life he served in many important*

*diplomatic posts in many lands, and in 1898 became Secretary of State of the United States, in which position he negotiated a number of great treaties, including those that led to making the Panama Canal. He edited Lincoln's "Complete Works" and wrote an authoritative biography of the man with whom he had worked intimately.*)

9. GENERAL WINFIELD SCOTT (TEN-REEL EDITION):

What is your opinion of General Scott as he is shown in the picture? What are the principal elements of his character? How do his actions affect the story? (*In 1861 General Scott was 75 years of age. He directed the United States forces until*



November. He had given brilliant service in the War of 1812, and in numerous Indian wars, and had led with great skill in 1847 in the War with Mexico. In 1852 he was nominated for the Presidency.)

10. GENERAL ULYSSES S. GRANT (TEN-REEL, FIVE-REEL, AND THREE-REEL EDITIONS):

What does the picture show concerning General Grant's purposes? His methods? His personal habits? His manner of speech? His relations with Lincoln? (In 1864, when General Grant became Commander - in - Chief of United States forces, he was 43. A graduate of West Point, he was promoted for his bravery and skill. In

1854 he resigned from the Army and lived in private life until 1861, when he volunteered and became a Colonel. He directed his men so forcefully and successfully that he gained rapid promotion. After his capture of Vicksburg and his victory at Chattanooga he became Commander - in - Chief, and with relentless energy conducted a long series of battles that led to the capture of Richmond and the surrender of Lee's Army. In 1868 and again in 1872 he was elected to the Presidency. His "Personal Memoirs" is a notable autobiography. Grant's Tomb on Riverside Drive, New York, is one of the Nation's most impressive memorials.)



*How does this scene show dramatic suspense?*



THE PRESIDENT AND HIS CABINET IN A SCENE FROM  
*What were Lincoln's relations with his cabinet? What*



D. W. GRIFFITH PRODUCTION, "ABRAHAM LINCOLN"

*Does Director Griffith's pictorial composition effective?*





*What qualities of Lincoln are dramatically revealed?*

11. EDWIN M. STANTON (ALL EDITIONS) :

What is your opinion of Secretary Stanton, as shown in the picture? What did the members of the Cabinet think of Lincoln? How did Lincoln control the Cabinet? (*Edwin M. Stanton, Lincoln's Secretary of War, had been a leading lawyer, and had served as Attorney General. He was efficient and capable but quick in temper, harsh and critical in manner, and often antagonistic to Lincoln. Stalwart and honest, he gave most valuable services in the conduct of the Civil War.*)

12. GENERAL PHILIP SHERIDAN

(TEN-REEL, FIVE-REEL, AND THREE-REEL EDITIONS) :

What does the picture show of Sheridan's dashing qualities? How did he turn defeat into victory? How is suspense made a part of his story? (*General Sheridan, like Grant, was a graduate of West Point. His famous ride of 20 miles from Winchester to Cedar Creek, when he rallied his defeated forces, is one of the notable events of the Civil War. As a cavalry commander he gave unequalled service. Read to the class Thomas Buchanan Read's stirring poem, "Sheridan's Ride."*)



13. GENERAL ROBERT E. LEE (TEN-REEL, FIVE-REEL, AND THREE-REEL EDITIONS):

How does the picture make you feel toward General Lee? What shows his kindness? His earnestness? His devotion? His spirit of religion? His greatness? (*Robert E. Lee, the most loved commander in the Civil War, was 58 at the time of his surrender in 1865. A son of "Light-Horse Harry" Lee of Washington's army, Robert E. Lee was a member of one of the most distinguished of Virginia families. At West Point he gained high honors, and he won distinc-*

*tion and promotion in the War with Mexico. As commander of Confederate forces he showed himself a general of skill that has won the admiration of history. With far smaller forces than his enemy had, Lee was able to use all his men to the greatest advantage. After the war he became the inspiring President of what is now Washington and Lee University. He was one of the ablest and noblest of Americans.*)

14. ABRAHAM LINCOLN (ALL EDITIONS):

What does the picture show of Lincoln's early life? His



*Does Director Griffith excel in scenes of mass action?*



*How does this show exactness of detail?*

dress? His habits? His strength? His companions? His means of gaining education? His love affairs? His work as lawyer? How did Lincoln look during the debates with Douglas? What were his arguments? What were Lincoln's purposes as President? How did he first impress his Cabinet? How did he show himself great? How did he employ humorous stories? How did the conduct of the Civil War affect him? What shows his sympathy and kindness? What events led to his death? What makes the closing scenes of the play especially pathetic? (*Lincoln was born in Kentucky in 1809. In his poverty-stricken frontier surroundings he had less than a year's education in school. By reading and study he*

*educated himself. At 19 he went on a flatboat to New Orleans. He repeated the journey a year or so later. After farm work and splitting rails, he became clerk in a country store and postmaster. Having taken part in local politics, he served in the State Legislature of Illinois from 25 to 33. In 1842, at 33, he married Mary Todd of Kentucky. In 1846, at 37, he was elected to Congress. In 1854, at 45, he took part in a series of debates with Stephen A. Douglas, making himself a national figure by upholding national unity. In 1860, at 51, he was elected President, and immediately was plunged into the difficulties and perplexities of the Civil War. In 1862 he issued the Emancipation Proclamation. In November, 1863, he delivered his famous Gettys-*

*burg Oration, which, better than anything else, shows his high purpose and noble character. In 1864 he was re-elected for a second term. Before he could formulate his plans for reconstruction after the war, he was assassinated, April 14, 1865.)*

15. JOHN WILKES BOOTH (ALL EDITIONS):

Does the picture present him as sane? How are his actions given great suspense? (*The 26-year-old actor, member of a family of noted actors, had served in the Confederate forces. Embittered by the war, he led a few others into the conspiracy that brought about the death of Lincoln. In spite of having broken his leg when he leaped to the stage, he avoided capture for 12 days. He was discovered in hiding and shot while refusing to yield.*)

**DISCUSSION OF DRAMATIC EFFECTS (All Editions)**

1. Which scenes do most to lead one into knowledge of Lincoln's heart?
2. What dramatic effects do most to reveal Lincoln's characteristics?
3. What parts of the photoplay do most to arouse one's emotions?
4. In how many different parts of the photoplay did you notice strong suspense?
5. Which moments of climax are most powerful?
6. What character contrasts aid in producing dramatic values?
7. In what parts of the film are group scenes used most effectively?
8. Which close-ups produce most pleasing effects? Most disagreeable?
9. Which scenes are most in accord with historic fact?
10. What places are presented with great regard for accuracy?



*What emotions do the faces express?*





*"With malice toward none; with charity for all."*

11. What sound effects are most appropriate and most convincing?
12. How does the film show Lincoln's steady development in personality and power?
13. Which historic persons are presented most convincingly?
14. Which sets evidently called for the greatest care in preparation?
15. What great admirations does the film arouse?
16. With what emotions did the play leave you?

ALL EDITIONS EXCEPT THE ONE-REEL:

17. How does song aid dramatic effect?
18. What effects are produced by

the inclusion of child characters?

TEN-REEL EDITION:

19. How do the quick flashes that precede and end the film add to the dramatic effects?
20. In what parts of the story are comic scenes brought in as relief?

### SENTENCES WORTHY OF COMMENT

In what circumstances are the following sentences spoken in the film? Explain the sentences in full, with all their implications.

ALL EDITIONS:

1. "A lot of people think a man named Abraham Lincoln is go-



ing further than Mr. Douglas."

2. "A house divided against itself must fall."
3. "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, we shall bind up the Nation's wounds and cherish peace."
4. "Government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

#### TEN-REEL EDITION:

5. "'Shucks!' He'll never amount to nothin', nohow."
6. "'Homely as a mud fence.'"
7. "'Smartest man in New Salem.'"
8. "'You've been a Captain in the Indian war; in the legislature; a politician, stump - speaker, and surveyor.'"

#### TEN-REEL AND FIVE-REEL EDITIONS:

9. "'That woman scares me; she's

even got the ridiculous idea that I could get to be President.'"

10. "'I really think, after all, you need me.'"

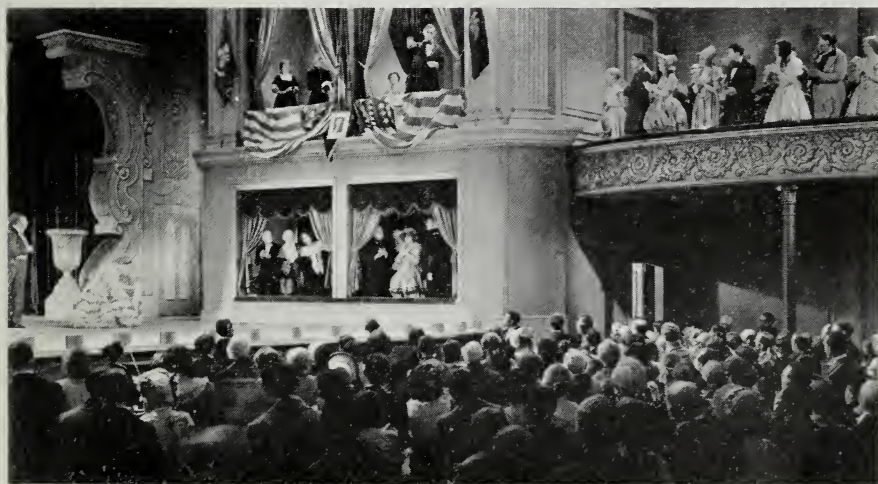
#### TEN-REEL, FIVE-REEL, AND THREE-REEL EDITIONS:

11. "'Young man, I'm going to pardon you; go back and do your duty.'"
12. "'They'll need their horses for the spring plowing.'"

### WORD STUDY

Explain as many of the following expressions as you can. Indicate their relation to the story told by the motion picture.

1. "He's the best rail-splitter in the country."
2. "He ran for the Legislature."
3. "You've been a stump-speaker."
4. "A brilliant, cultured gentleman."



*With what care was this scene made?*

5. "I will not throw mud."
6. "The situation is ominous."
7. "I will shoulder all responsibilities."
8. "There are 600,000 Copperheads in the North."
9. "The right wing is in full retreat."
10. "Rest assured, there will be no interference, no intrusion."
9. Exhibit pictures of Lincoln's early homes.
10. Show a five-dollar bill with a picture of Lincoln and another with a picture of the Lincoln Memorial. Do any coins show Lincoln's portrait?

## LINCOLN COLLECTIONS

1. Make a list of counties, towns, and cities in the United States, named after Abraham Lincoln. (*See any large dictionary.*)
2. Exhibit Postage Stamps made in memory of Lincoln. (*See certain issues of 2c, 3c, 4c, 5c, and 6c stamps and the present 16c stamp.*)
3. Prepare a paragraph concerning the Lincoln Tunnel. (*The Midtown Tunnel, 8,000 feet long, from New York to Weehawken, N. J.*)
4. Present a series of pictures of Lincoln, including pictures of statues of Lincoln.
5. Make a list of things and businesses to which the name "Lincoln" has been applied. (*See a telephone or business directory.*)
6. Make a map showing the Lincoln Highway. (*An automobile road from New York to San Francisco.*)
7. Exhibit pictures of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D. C.
8. Draw a map showing the location of Mount Lincoln. (*In the Rocky Mountains near Leadville, Colorado; 14,297 feet high.*)

## SUPPLEMENTARY READING

- Andrews, Mary Raymond Shipman: *The Perfect Tribute.*
- Andrews, Mary Raymond Shipman: *The Counsel Assigned.*
- Bacheller, Irving: *A Boy for the Ages.*
- Bradford, Gamaliel: *Lee the American.*
- Bullard, F. L.: *Tad and His Father.*
- Charnwood, G. R.: *Abraham Lincoln.*
- Davies, H. E.: *The Life of General Sheridan.*
- Dixon, Thomas: *A Man of the People.*
- Drinkwater, John: *Abraham Lincoln.*
- Drinkwater, John: *Robert E. Lee.*
- Gore, J.: *The Boyhood of Abraham Lincoln.*
- Levinger, E. E.: *A Child of the Frontier.*
- Lincoln, Abraham: *The Gettysburg Oration; the Cooper Institute Address; Inaugural Addresses; Lincoln and Douglas Debates; Letters and Papers.*
- Markham, Edwin: *Lincoln, and Other Poems.*
- Masters, Edgar Lee: *Lee.*
- McClure, A. K.: *Lincoln's Yarns and Stories.*
- Nicholay, H.: *Boy's Life of Abraham Lincoln.*
- Nicolay, J. G., and Hay, John: *Abraham Lincoln.*
- Page, Thomas Nelson: *Robert E. Lee.*
- Sandburg, Carl: *Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years; The War Years.*
- Sanford, A. P.: *Lincoln Plays.*
- Tarbell, Ida M.: *The Life of Abraham Lincoln.*
- Tarbell, Ida M.: *The Boy Scout's Life of Lincoln.*
- Tarbell, Ida M.: *He Knew Lincoln.*



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